

## Message Text

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64

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-10 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 MC-02 IGA-02

AID-05 TRSE-00 /101 W

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R 051520Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 493

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 1669

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US, EG

SUBJECT: ISRAELI MEDIA ON U.S. ARMS SALES TO EGYPT

REF: TEL AVIV 1647

BEGIN SUMMARY: MAJOR TOPIC OF ISRAELI MEDIA TODAY IS WASHINGTON REPORTS OF CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS BY DEFENSE SECRETARY RUMSFELD, SECRETARY KISSINGER, AND SICO REGARDING U.S. ARMS SALES TO EGYPT. PRESS ALSO GIVE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO RABIN'S PUBLIC CRITICISM OF PROPOSED SALES. END SUMMARY

1. ISRAELI PRESS GIVES FRONTPAGE COVERAGE TO WASHINGTON-BASED REPORTS REGARDING SALES OF AMERICAN ARMS TO EGYPT.

JERUSALEM POST (BLITZER) AND OTHER NEWSPAPER QUOTE U.S.

DEFENSE SECRETARY RUMSFELD AS SAYING IN A NEWS CONFERENCE THAT HE EXPECTS WEAPONS TO BECOME PART OF U.S. RELATIONS WITH THE EGYPTIANS. RUMSFELD SAID THAT HE WOULD BE SURPRISED "IF IT WAS LIMITED TO C-130S...I WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE A RIFLE, OR OTHER THINGS THAT WOULD LOGICALLY BECOME UNCLASSIFIED

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PART OF SUCH RELATIONSHIP..." RUMSFELD CALLED AMERICAN

SALE OF ARMS TO EGYPT "A HEALTHY THING" FOR BOTH THE U.S.  
AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

2. AT THE SAME TIME, ACCORDING TO ISRAELI PRESS REPORTS,  
SECRETARY KISSINGER TOLD HOUSEOF REPRESENTATIVES INTER-  
NATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE THAT THE U.S. SHOULD SELL  
SIX C-130 TRANSPORT PLANES TO EGYPT AS A SYMBOL OF SUPPORT  
FOR PRESIDENT SADAT BUT THAT HE (KISSINGER) DOES NOT  
ANTICIPATE ANYARMS SALES IN THE "NEXT FEW MONTHS..."  
KISSINGER IS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT  
THE U.S. "CANNOT BE THE PRINCIPAL ARMS SUPPLIER TO EGYPT.."  
HE ADDED THAT THE EGYPTIAN MOVEMENT AWAY FROMDEPENDENCE ON  
THE SOVIETS FOR SUPPLIES "WAS A COURAGEOUS DECISION ON THE  
PART OF SADAT." THE U.S., KISSINGER DECLARED, MUST DO WHAT  
IS IN ITS--NOT ISRAEL'S--BEST NATIONAL INTEREST, AND THE  
DECISION TO  
SELL THE PLANES TO EGYPT WAS MADE ACCORDINGLY.

3. PRESS AND RADIO ALSO NOTE "SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTION  
INFORMATION" GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR DINITZ BY KISSINGER AND  
SISCO.JERUSALEM POST (BLITZER) WRITES THAT "INFORMED  
SOURCES HERE SAID THAT KISSINGER INFORMED DINITZ DURING A  
TELEPHONECONVERSATION YESTERDAY MORNING THAT THE ADMINISTRA-  
TION WAS CONSIDERING ONLY THE SALE OF THE SIX C-130S...  
TO EGYPT. KISSINGER TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE  
ADMINISTRATION WAS NOT CURRENTLY CONSIDERING OTHER ARMS  
SALES TO EGYPT. BUT SISCO...TOLD DINITZ DURING A MEETING  
ON MONDAY THAT THE C-130 DEAL WITH EGYPT WAS ONLY THE  
START OF MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP THAT WOULD LATER  
INCLUDE OTHER ITEMS, INCLUDING TRANSPORT HELICOPTERS,  
MILITARY TRAININGPROGRAMS, RADIO EQUIPMENT AND MINE  
DETECTORS..."

4. PRESS ADDS THAT IN A MEETING BETWEENKISSINGER AND  
DINITZ, SCHEDULED FOR TODAY (MARCH 5), THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR  
WILL EXPRESS ISRAEL'S PROTEST AT DECISION TO SELL AMERICAN  
ARMSTO EGYPT AND SEEK CLARIFICATIONS ON THE INFORMATION  
GIVEN TO ISRAEL BY THE SECRETARY AND SISCO. JERUSALEM POST  
(BLITZER) ADDS THAT ACCORDING TO SOME OBSERVERS IN WASHING-  
TON "KISSINGER WAS ONCE AGAIN TRYING TO 'MISLEAD' ISRAEL...  
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KISSINGER WAS ONLY TRYING TO SHOW ISRAEL...THAT HE WAS ON  
THE SIDE OF THE JEWISH STATE, WHEN IN FACT THIS WAS ACTUALLY  
A PLOY. OTHER SOURCES, SYMPATHETIC TO KISSINGER, SAID THE  
SECRETARY WAS GENUINELY OPPOSED TO THE START OF A MILITARY  
SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH EGYPT AT THIS TIME, CONVINCED THAT  
IT WOULD SERIOUSLY STRAINU.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONS AND DAMAGE  
THE ADMINISTRATION'S POPULARITY IN THE CONGRESS. KISSINGER  
WAS BEING OVERRULED BY THE PRESIDENT..."

5. ALL NEWSPAPERS HIGHLIGHT PRIME MINISTER RABIN'S REMARKS  
ON SUPPLY OF AMERICAN ARMS TO EGYPT NOTING THAT THE U.S.  
WILL BECOME A MOVING FORCE IN ACCELERATING THE MIDDLE  
EAST ARMS RACE IF IT SUPPLIES ARMS TO EGYPT (SEE REFTEL).  
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